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ETHIOPIA

SUCCESS STORY

Family Planning Reaches Rural Areas

Service-based training provides family planning and builds local capacity



Photo: Patfinder/Mellesse Desaign

Mothers wait to receive family planning services at the Bako Clinic in West Shoa, Ethiopia.

“Service-based training hits two and more birds with one stone,” said Ambaw Damtew, program coordinator in Ethiopia’s Oromia Region for a USAID-funded family planning program.

For the 85 percent of Ethiopians living in rural areas, a lack of access to information, counseling, and transportation to health facilities is a major barrier to seeking family planning services.

“In meetings with our community health workers, they tell us there is a demand for more long-term family planning methods. ‘Do you have more?’ the mothers always ask. So, we designed service-based training,” said Ambaw Damtew, program coordinator in the Oromia Region for a USAID-funded training program in long-term family planning methods targeting rural communities.

The service-based training has three phases: pre-procedure, on-procedure and post-procedure. The trainees receive four to five days of theoretical training, including model demonstrations, followed by five to eight days of practical training, which includes inserting and removing birth control implants for women at rural health centers, supervised by gynecologists.

Each trainee carries out a minimum of 60 insertions per training session, well beyond the World Health Organization-standard of five insertions and one removal needed to become a certified professional. The approach to service-based training effectively addresses both building capacity of the health sector and meeting the need for family planning services at once.

In addition to the birth control implants, the trainees provide clients with a full range of family planning methods. Nearly 200 health professionals in all six zones of Oromia and over 10,000 women have received training on long-term family planning methods. In addition, the program is also rolling out similar service-based trainings and outreach services in the Amhara, Tigray and Southern Nations, Nationalities, and People’s Regions.